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19



Research Project

*The Potential for Political Violence in
Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand:
Report on a Quantitative Analytical Model*

Progress Report No. 3

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March 1975

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The Potential for Political Violence in Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand: Report on a Quantitative Analytical Model

This is the third in a series of reports on the testing of an analytical model of political violence adapted from Ted Robert Gurr's frustration-aggression theory (*Why Men Rebel*, Princeton University Press, 1970). The Gurr theory is based on the proposition that political violence is the product of group frustrations reinforced by the belief that violence is justified and by the capability to turn the resulting politicized anger into collective aggression. The form of the ensuing violence—*turmoil* (riots or demonstrations), *insurgency* (terrorist acts or small-scale guerrilla operations), *conspiracy* (attempted coups), or *internal war* (large-scale revolutionary actions or civil war)—will depend upon the kinds of relationships which are found to exist among various types of groups in the country under examination. A complete description of the theory and of the procedures devised to operationalize it as an analytical tool is contained in an earlier OPR report of an experimental, *ex post facto* test of the model in the Chilean situation of mid-1973 (OPR 502, Revised, November 1974).

The purpose of this second phase of the project is to test the value of the Gurr model as a technique for assessing the nature and potential for political violence in societies of varying stages of development and with quite different cultural heritages and political institutions. The three countries chosen—Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand—seem to meet our requirements: Each represents a different stage of development in a distinct geographic area, and each is confronted with domestic unrest or political conflict.

For each of the three countries, a panel of five CIA analysts assigns numerical evaluations at regular intervals to the model's key variables—relative deprivation or collective frustration, belief in the justification for violence, coercive force, and institutionalized support. The evaluations are made for each group or "actor" which, in the panel's judgment, represents a significant political force in the country. The country's actors are also assessed in terms of their identification with four basic actor-categories: Pro-regime, mass-oriented (PR-MO); pro-regime, elite-oriented (PR-EO); anti-regime, mass-oriented (AR-MO); and anti-regime, elite-oriented (AR-EO). At each point of assessment during the test period, the panel's evaluations are combined statistically, using computerized procedures devised in the Office of Political Research, to produce overall evaluations of the Potential for Political Violence (PPV) and of the conditions conducive to particu-

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NOTE: Comments or questions on this project will be welcomed by its author ☐☐ Office of Political Research ☐

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lar types of violence in the country under observation. The three panels' evaluations are made on a monthly schedule, and the entire test series is expected to run until mid-1975.

The summary below presents the principal findings from the fourth set of assessments made by the country panels in mid-March 1975. The graphs on succeeding pages display trends based on the four sets of assessments made to date. Subsequent monthly progress reports, based in each case on mid-month evaluations, will indicate trend changes in the panels' scoring patterns. In this way, the model's projections of the potential and form of political violence can be tested against actual developments in each country during the test period.

Summary of Principal Findings

(NOTE: The data cited below and in the following graphs are keyed to each country's Potential for Political Violence or PPV, as reflected by the median PPV score of each five-member country panel. *The figures should not be regarded as representing either probabilities or absolute quantities; they should be interpreted merely as indicating relative status or strength, compared to other variables in the model assessed by the same country panel or to corresponding variables assessed by the other two country panels.*)

General:

1. The mid-March assessments of the three country panels confirmed the sharp contrast between Ethiopia on the one hand and Argentina and Thailand on the other. While the potential for political violence in Ethiopia continued to grow, reaching a level about double that of the other two countries, the potential in Argentina and Thailand remained relatively low and stable.
2. Conditions defined by the model as conducive to particular types of violence varied among the three countries. Within the limits of their relatively low potential for violence, Argentina showed a slight tendency toward insurgency, while Thailand displayed a tendency toward turmoil. On the other hand, Ethiopia, within the limits of a much greater potential for violence, showed a clear tilt toward internal war.
3. In Ethiopia, anti-regime actors far outweighed pro-regime actors in potential for political violence. In the other two countries, actor groups were more evenly matched: in Thailand, pro-regime elite actors had somewhat more potential than the other three types of actors, while in Argentina pro-regime elite and anti-regime elite actors had a slight edge in potential for violence.
4. Following the same general pattern, actor groups in Ethiopia were judged to be more than twice as politically frustrated as actor groups in either Argentina or Thailand. The capability (coercive force and institutionalized support) to turn this frustration into political violence, however, remained about the same for all three countries.
5. The range of variation in assessments among the participating analysts was greatest for the Argentina panel, slightly less for the Ethiopian panel, and least for the Thai panel.

2

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The potential for political violence in Argentina showed a slight decline in the February-March period (a drop in PPV score from 42 to 37). Within limits defined by that reduced potential, conditions appeared slightly more favorable for insurgency (10) than for the other three types of political violence (each 9). Following the January-February trend, conditions favorable to turmoil continued to decline (down 3 from February). The potential for violence among pro-regime elite actors dropped during the period (from 14 to 10), but remained relatively unchanged for the other three types of actors (8, 9, and 10). Politicized frustration in Argentina continued to decline (from 25 to 21), while the capability to translate that frustration into political violence remained essentially unchanged from previous months (8 for coercive force, 8 for institutional support). Following the January-February pattern, members of the Argentine panel showed a sharply increased divergence in their assessments (a jump from a range of 23 around a median PPV score of 42 in February to a range of 43 around a median PPV score of 37 in March).

Ethiopia:

In Ethiopia the potential for political violence continued to climb (an increase in PPV from 73 to 78). Within the limits of that growing potential, conditions were most conducive to internal war (24), somewhat less so for conspiracy (20), and insurgency (18), and least for turmoil (16). Conditions for conspiracy showed a slight decline from February (down 3 from 23), while conditions for the other three types of violence all increased during the period (up 2 for internal war, up 3 for insurgency, up 3 for turmoil). Though pro-regime elite actors showed a slight gain in PPV during the period (an increase of 3 to 16), in general anti-regime actors continued to show far more potential for violence than pro-regime actors (anti-regime mass and elite groups showed a combined PPV of 53, compared to only 25 for pro-regime mass and elite groups). Following the January-February trend, politicized frustration continued to climb in Ethiopia (a rise from 51 to 56), while the capability to fuel that frustration into violence remained relatively stable (10 for coercive force, 12 for institutional support). Variation among members of the Ethiopian panel decreased somewhat during the period but remained relatively high (a range of 40 around the median PPV score of 78).

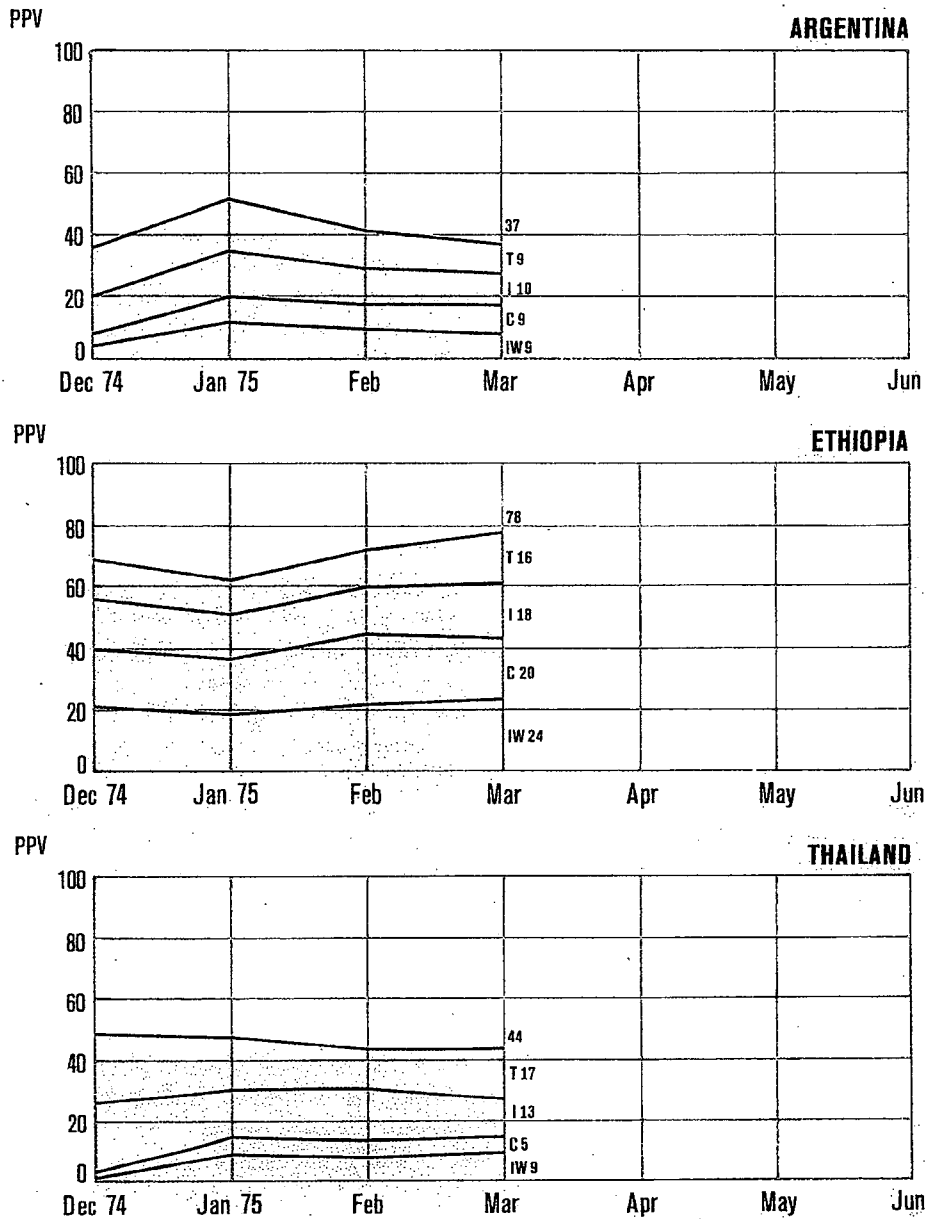
Thailand:

In the February-March period, the potential for political violence in Thailand remained unchanged (a PPV score of 44). Within limits defined by that potential, conditions remained most favorable for turmoil (an increase of 3 to 17), and insurgency (a decline of 4 to 13), and least favorable to internal war (up 1 to 9) and conspiracy (unchanged at 5). The degree of PPV among particular actor groups remained relatively unchanged: pro-regime elite actors (16) and anti-regime mass actors (13) continued to have a larger potential for violence than either anti-regime elite actors (8) or pro-regime mass actors (7). Politicized frustration declined somewhat (from 26 to 24), while the coercive force and institutional support required to channel that frustration into violence remained relatively unchanged (9 and 11, respectively). Variation among members of the Thai panel widened in the February-March period (to a range of 34 around the March median PPV score of 44).

3
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Conditions Conducive to Particular Types of Political Violence



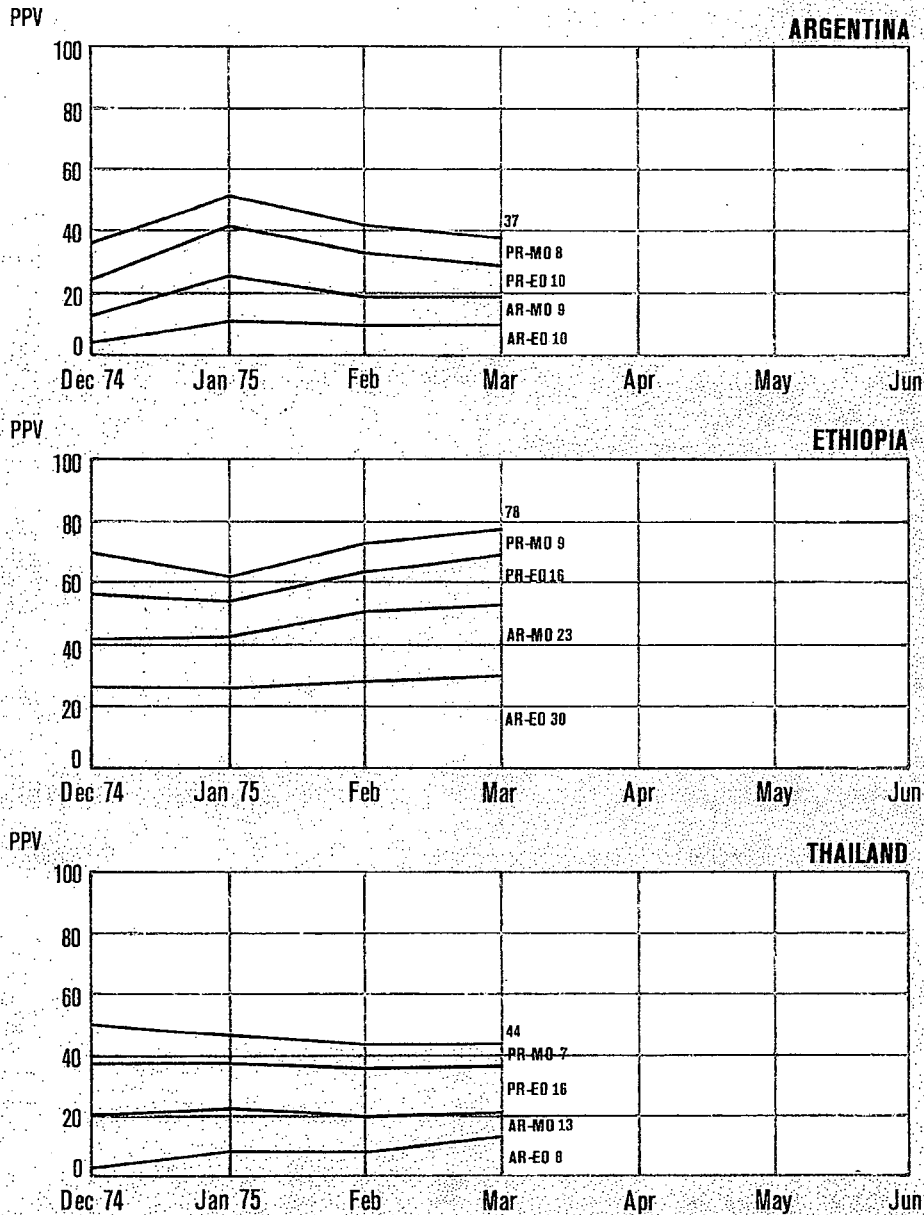
Shaded areas represent, within the limits of each country's potential for political violence (PPV), the degree to which that country panel's median scores on key variables fulfill the conditions hypothesized by the Gurr theory as conducive to each type of political violence.

T - Turmoil
I - Insurgency
C - Conspiracy
IW - Internal War

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4
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~**The Potential for Political Violence (PPV) for Each Type of Actor**

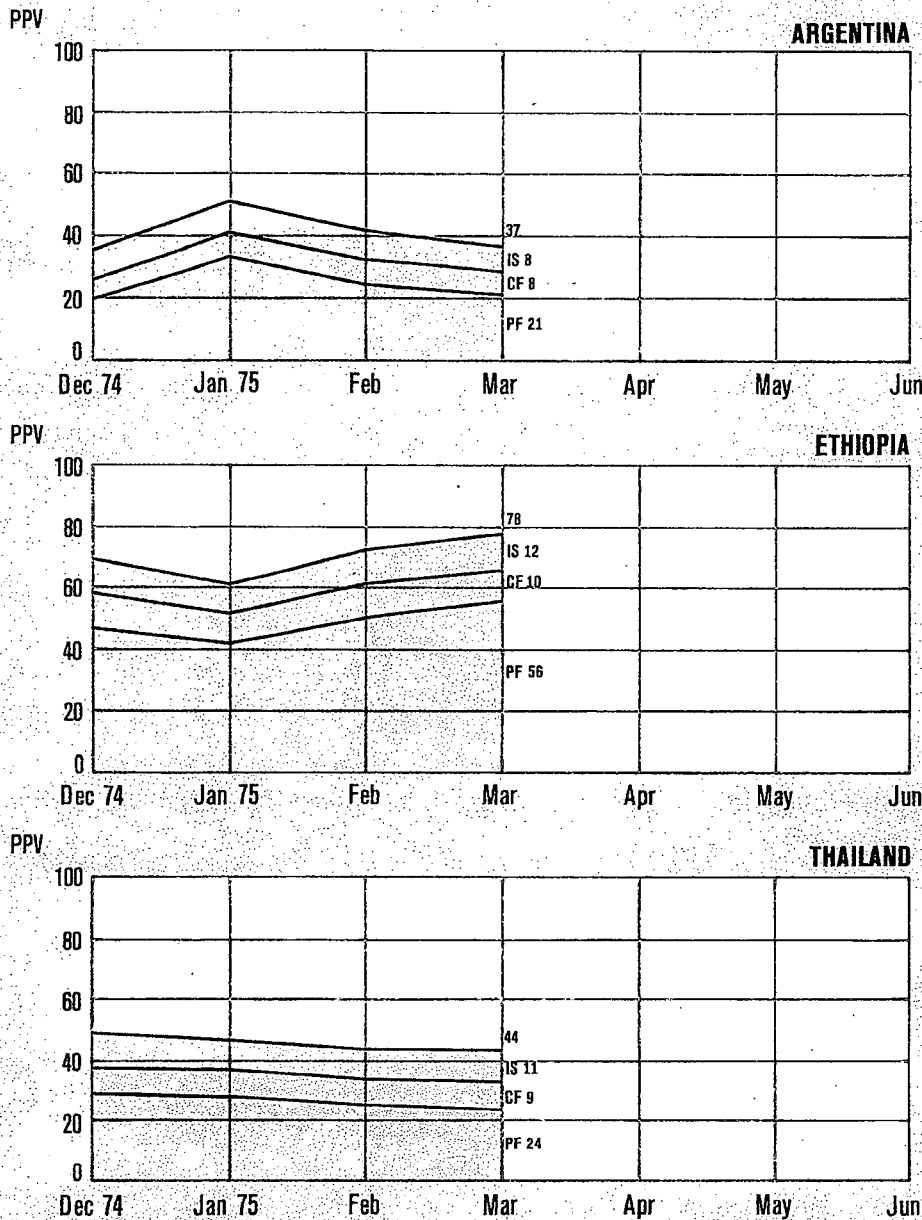
Shaded areas represent each country panel's median scores for PPV for each actor category.

PR-MO-Pro-Regime, Mass-Oriented Actors
 PR-EO- Pro-Regime, Elite-Oriented Actors
 AR-MO-Anti-Regime, Mass-Oriented Actors
 AR-EO- Anti-Regime, Elite-Oriented Actors

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5
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~**The Potential for Political Violence (PPV) in Terms of Key Variables in the Gurr Model**

Shaded areas represent sums of each country panel's median scores for each key variable for all actor categories.

IS - Institutional Support
 CF - Coercive Force
 PF - Politicized Frustration
 (relative deprivation x
 justification for violence)

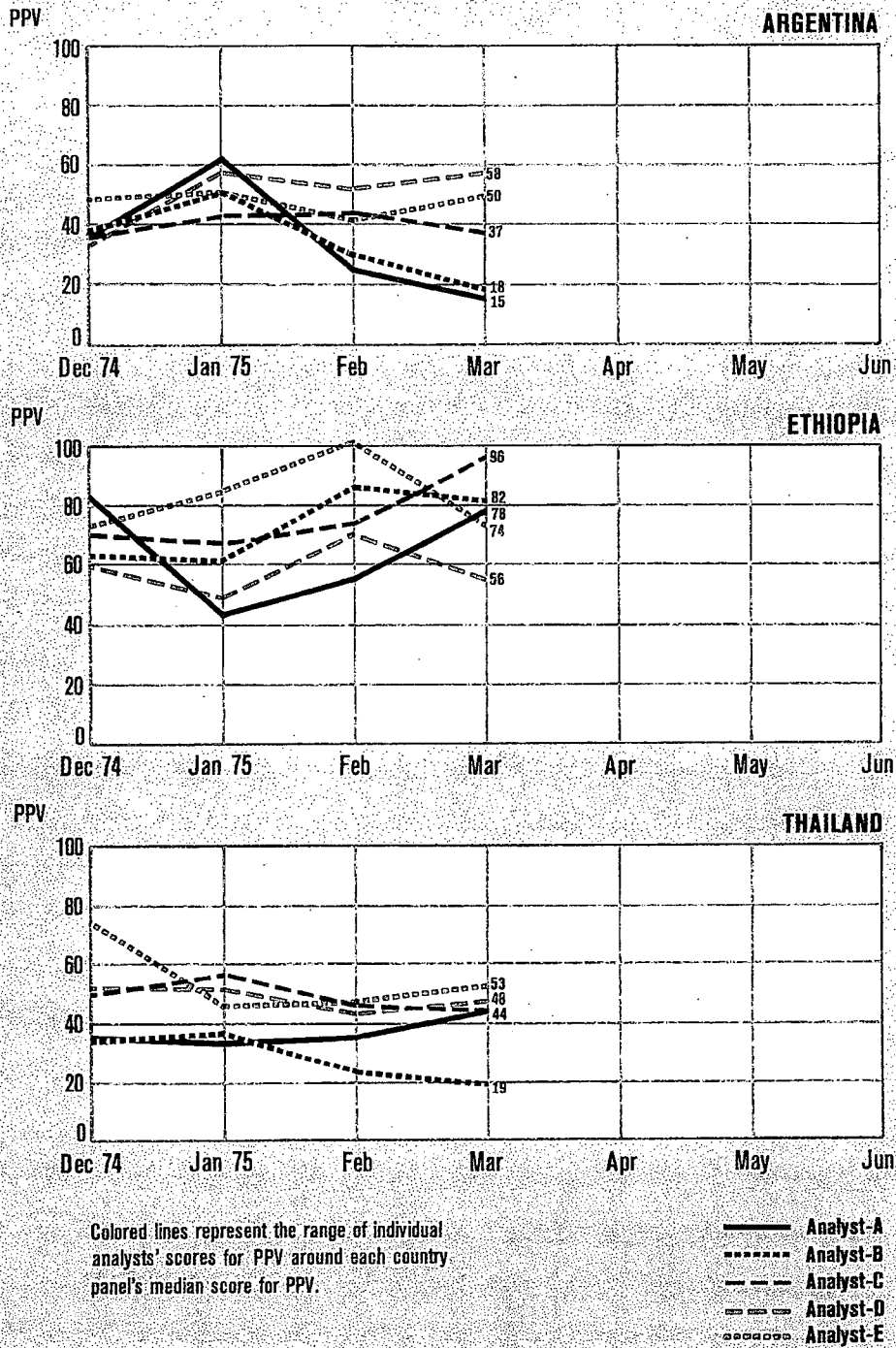
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Individual Analysts' Assessments of the Potential for Political Violence (PPV)

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